









From the Charleston Courier

Wm. C. Bramlet, of the Eighth Virginia Cavalry, Colonel Jenkins, gives us the following account of his capture, subsequent escape and suffering in his efforts to get back to the South:

He was captured in November, 1861, and taken to camp Chase, four miles west of Columbia, and was kept in close confinement until March, a period of five months. On the 12th of March some laborers being sent into the prison to ditch the prison grounds, Mr. Bramlet entered into conversation with them and finding them Southern men in principle, and expressing sympathy with his condition, and offered to assist him as far as lay in their power. He suggested, as the most feasible plan, a change of clothing in his barracks, substituting a laborer's suit for the uniform he then wore. The laborer's suit was procured, the change made, and being furnished with a spade, he joined the others and went to work at the house of the laborers. Following his new companions to the tool house, he, with the rest, deposited his spade, passed on through the Yankee camp and outside of their pickets to the turnpike. The party there seated themselves on a lumber wagon used for bringing up the plank for the repair of the prison walls, and were taken to Columbia, one of the laborers to avoid any suspicion, mentioned Mr. Bramlet to the Confederate authorities, and commenced talking very violently in the Confederate tongue, or friendlier answering and nodding as sent. They passed on through one of the principal streets, turned into an alley and from there to the house of the laborer. Here Mr. Bramlet, upon the collection of ten cents, when his friend told him that, as everything was then quiet, it might be unsafe for him to remain in the city, it would be well for him to continue on his road. His friend guided him through a back street to the turnpike and accompanied him on his way to a plank road about a mile distant, where he gave the necessary directions and he should proceed.

Mr. Bramlet traveled all that day, but having just recovered from a severe attack of typhoid fever, he was unable to make any great progress, and found that he only walked that day fourteen miles. Arriving, about half an hour before sunset, at a station called Louis Creek, and seeing an express train come up, he stepped into the car and took a seat. Upon the conductor asking him for a ticket, he replied he had none but that he wished to go to Sandusky, that he had but one dollar with him and would ride as far as that would pay.

The conductor took his dollar and told him to get off at Crystaline Station. Walking on about a mile from this station he stopped all night with a German, and next day walked seven miles and a half, leaving upon an elder stick, being otherwise completely broken down. He stayed that night with a young man, who shared his supper with him, and the next morning again started. Coming across some laborers working on the railroad from Columbia to Cleveland, he was asked as to his lameness. He told them that he was a Canadian, and that he had been captured by the Yankees, and was now on his way to Sandusky. He was then asked if he was a free man, and he replied that he was, and that he was now on his way to Sandusky.

He arrived in Sandusky in the evening, without money, and in a state of starvation. His only clothes were the laborer's suit, and he was in a state of extreme weakness. He was then taken to a hotel, and the next morning he was observed by him, one of them cried out, "I believe that fellow is an escaped prisoner." Another responded, "Yes, I believe it is old Jeff. Davis himself." Hearing this he became excited, but seemingly paying no attention, forgot his lameness, and walked off as rapidly as possible. Keeping on for about two miles and finding no pursuit, the fugitive turned back, and went to a place, and he was again as lame as before. It was now raining, with hail and snow falling, and blowing a gale from the northeast. With this, ragged clothing, for which he had exchanged his warm Southern uniform, it seemed as though every blast pelted through him, and he was in danger of freezing to death. Upon asking several to take him to a place, he was refused, and he was then taken to a place, and he was again as lame as before. It was now raining, with hail and snow falling, and blowing a gale from the northeast. With this, ragged clothing, for which he had exchanged his warm Southern uniform, it seemed as though every blast pelted through him, and he was in danger of freezing to death. Upon asking several to take him to a place, he was refused, and he was then taken to a place, and he was again as lame as before.

At another time he became lost in the forest, got entangled among trees, and several times gave up in despair, submitting himself to fate. Finding boxes of matches in one of his pockets, he determined on one more effort, and getting a few dry chips, pulled off the bark of an old hollow tree, succeeded in kindling a fire. By means of this fire he succeeded in keeping warm, and standing over it, he managed to keep from freezing until daylight. Although paralyzed in limbs and benumbed as he was, he succeeded in crossing another strip of woods, came up to a fence, and the welcome sight of a farm house greeted his eyes. Upon calling at the gate he was invited in and sat down to warm himself, but was compelled shortly after to get up and get the means to continue his journey. The farmer immediately recommended him to a neighbor who had been inquiring for laborers. Mr. Bramlet, after again thanking the farmer, started for the place to which he had been directed, but mistaking the house, stopped at another farm house, the proprietor of which was an Irishman, who told him that he was a poor man, and that he was a good Democrat who expressed his sympathy with the South, and would be glad to assist him.

Mr. Bramlet started, and upon arriving at the place saw the proprietor in the yard. He told him that he had been recommended to him to get work. The reply was, that he had thought of him, but the weather being fine, he thought, with the assistance of his boys, and money matters rather tight, he would rather manage what he could do. He asked Mr. Bramlet what he could do. The reply was, anything. The proprietor scanned him very closely, and did not seem to like his appearance. Seeing he was not likely to succeed, Mr. Bramlet revealed his true condition. He was immediately welcomed in, and here he staid for two weeks, until he had recovered from his lameness. The proprietor then furnished him the means to continue his journey. Mr. Bramlet went to Sandusky, thence to Toledo, from there to Detroit, and getting on board a ferry boat was landed upon the Canadian side at a place called Windsor, Upper Canada. There he met the Hon. Mr. Elliott, Queen's Counsel, who invited him to his place at London. He was respectfully and kindly received by the citizens of that place, and a contribution made up for him. He was also given free transport or right of way on the Grand Trunk Railway to Quebec, with a letter of introduction to the Hon. Mr. Portman, M. P., an intimate friend of Gen. Wade Hampton. Mr. P., and his friends here made up another contribution, by which means he was enabled to reach St. John's, N. B., from whence he embarked on board the schooner *Blanche*, on the 7th of June, and arrived at Nassau on the 24th.

Mr. Bramlet is now in this city. He says he found the people of Canada, much to his astonishment, almost all in favor of the South. He had been led to believe that the Canadians were all abolitionists, whereas, on the contrary, he found but two during his stay, those were Yankee traders, who had settled there on speculation. The Canadians say the free negroes are a

few and far between, and that the majority of the population are in favor of the South. He also says that the people of Canada are very kind and hospitable, and that he has been very well treated everywhere.

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